

TO: Selected Parties and their friends
RE: Editorial Perspectus for a new magazine:

Non Sequitur
The Journal of Existential Trivia

You are invited to take part in the publication of a magazine -- a "media for media's sake" experiment.

PURPOSE

- A. non sequitur
an inference or a conclusion that does not follow from the premises.
(from Latin: it does not follow)
- B. existentialism
a modern movement encompassing a variety of themes, among them the doctrine that individual existence determines essence, that humanity has absolute freedom of choice but that there are no rational criteria serving as a basis for choice, and the general claim that the universe is absurd, with an emphasis on the phenomena of anxiety and alienation.
- C. trivia
matters or things that are very unimportant, inconsequential, or inessential; trifles; trivialities.

The magazine will focus upon the inessential things in existence that determine essence, the irrational criteria that serve as the basis for choice, and the general and particular absurdities of the universe, with an emphasis on anxiety-producing minutiae and obscure manifestations of alienation.

At the outset, we will consider the UFMCC the absurd center of the absurd universe. Obviously, absurdity is a plague that will quickly engulf all tangential realities.

Above all, nothing about Non Sequitur follows from any perceivable premise!

EDITORIAL POLICY

A. It does not follow that the people of God should be able to blaspheme, be irreverent, or commit heresy in their expression of the religious experience. Therefore, blasphemy, irreverence, and heresy are criteria too ridiculous to be considered as part of absurdist editorial decisions.

By the same token, written criticisms of Non Sequitur material based on any or all of the above criteria will be boiled in lysergic acid diethylamide and returned via Express-Mail letter-bomb.

B. Since words are only sound-symbols that represent thoughts, it does not follow that these symbols have the capacity to be vulgar or obscene. Therefore, persons filing complaints implying the vulgarity or obscenity of language in Non Sequitur will be registered as thought offenders.

C. Non Sequitur has no political point of view. Having no point of view is itself a point of view that does not follow.

D. Staff and contributors may only use pseudonyms that contain the letters P, V, and W.

E. Being that our initial audience will be primarily English-speaking, space requires that we limit non-English material at present. Articles, etc., in legitimate foreign languages will be limited to 50 words; articles, etc., in code or imaginary languages limited to 25 words.

F. Any reference to persons living or dead coincidentally does not follow.

G. Ultimately, we will arbitrarily print what we like and trash what we don't.

H. Non Sequitur is published bi-occasionally.

CREATIVE CO-OPERATION

We want you to be part of the Non Sequitur project! Since the project is existential, you can participate without interrupting your daily existence -- there is no effort involved because nothing has to make sense, be in any way complete, or be done on time. You think, therefore you are Non Sequitur.

Start an article. If you don't finish it, send it in and someone else will... or we'll just print it as is. Middles of articles are also okay.

Get an idea. We'll include it in our list of articles to be written. Perhaps we'll publish an issue of titles.

Do any of these topics grab you? If so, write something...make an illustration ...free-associate some nonsense syllables.

* * * * *

Dental Researchers Report: "The width of your front teeth may indicate your potential for success in the professional ministry."

* * * * *

Ten liberal theologians admit they had contact with red fly-swatters during their formative years.

* * * * *

Graphs relate penis size and weekly tithe.

* * * * *

The post-pubescent disintegration of Shirley Temple's public effectiveness.

* * * * *

Do-it-yourself guide to church social hall construction by the designer of the facilities for Rising Tide MCC on the continent of Atlantis.

* * * * *

Mischief as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

Combinations of any of the above.

* * * * *

Anything else will be gladly considered!

SPECIAL CONTEST

We're on a special search for Akron, Ohio jokes. Anecdotes, limericks, knock-knocks, etc., having to do with the city of Akron, Ohio will be subject to some sort of prize. Quantity as well as quality counts!

MONEY

Financial contributions are as creative as artistic ones. Chip in! Postage stamps welcome. Please write to arrange dollar contributions.

BENEDICTUS

Remember:

"Valeriana Officinalis - Sugete as an additon to th evryay dit gaddi eede. Idal at meltme wih waer or prpaed as te ealt tera. Seluspac erom ro eno ekat, as desired."

Therefore, it does not follow...so, let's play magazine!

Non Sequitur

319 Mt. Washington Drive
Los Angeles, Ca. 90065

Yours in dada,

If you think I'm signing my name to this, you're crazy -
The Editor *It's bad enough I'm using my home address*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Core Group

FROM: Rev. Ragona

RE: EMBODIMENT STUDY

DATE: August 31, 1981

We will be beginning a study of the book, Embodiment, by James Nelson (Publisher, Augsburg). This book should be available in or through any good religious bookstore, many other bookstores, and probably from Wittemore's or Sheehan's. Would you please obtain a copy of this book and read it before September 16th. We will begin the study on September 16th, Wednesday, at 7:30 p.m. The church has had this announced and many have expressed interest in attending. While the study is being presented for the church it is in reality a study for us.

If you cannot attend a session, please make sure you read the chapter and get the material from the person presenting the topic.

Each of you is asked to present one chapter, and the schedule is printed below. I have tried to make the chapter fit the ability and level of education of the presenter (i.e., those with most training got the most difficult topics.)

The book deals with theology, church history, and Christian ethics regarding sexuality. It also deals with homosexuality and the Bible (and the church), and the issues surrounding women and the church. It is a book which I used as part of a course at Samaritan in Images of Men and Women in the Church. You are invited to be inventive, scholarly, and to make your presentation as interesting and as pertinent to MCC as you choose -- the latter, however, is a must.

Chapter	Topic	Presenter	Date
1.	The Church and Sexuality	Rev. Ragona	9/16
2.	Embodiment in Sexual Theology	John Coyle	9/23
3.	Sexual Alienation	Patty Clark	9/30
4.	Sexual Salvation	Steve Pierce	10/7
5.	Love and Sexual Ethics	Vickie Willard	10/14
6.	Marriage (HU) & Fidelity	Bette Speare	10/21
7.	Morality of Sexual Variations	John Ayres	10/28
8.	Homosexuality and the Church	Rev. Ragona	11/3
9.	The Sexually Disenfranchised	Ted LeVan	11/10
10.	The Church as Sexual Community	Ann Campbell	11/17
11.	Summation	The Panel	11/24

This book will be our core study for the fall. The presenters are asked to prepare a short paper which can be distributed to other members of the class. If you get it to me by Sunday, I can assure sufficient copies for everyone in the class.

The book will give you a great deal of information which you can use well in counseling with church members and with other gay Christians. Please cooperate with me in this, since we will all get to know each other better, I will get a better idea of student clergy abilities, and we will all come up with valuable information we can share with each other and with the church. If you are planning to be MCC clergy, this study will make your life easier for years to come!



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mcc Boston

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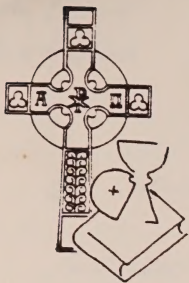
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Community of the Love of Christ

AN ECUMENICAL EPISCOPAL METROPOLITAN COVENANT - COMMUNITY

VI WEDNESDAY IN EASTER: 11 May 1983

Sisters, Brothers, Beloved Friends,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Once again, I come to you as a mendicant begging alms. Although this is mandated, indeed expected, as a part of my vocation as a Professed Religious--a Companion of the Community of the Love of Christ seeking to serve in a Christian Gay Ministry--it is still never an easy thing to do.

Some of you have been of great help in the past, when I had to move to New York to be with my mother as she faced two operations (both of which she has survived and, while her health is not good, she is no longer in any immediate danger), that I hesitate to write to you again in this manner. However, I must do so.

While in New York City I have been renting quarters from Bishop Mark Spencer. He is, however, now moving out of town. As such, I have less than three weeks to either find another place to live in New York or else to move back to San Francisco with my cat (who alone has been my constant companion for the past twelve years) and with the Church and Gay Movement files which are entrusted to me, Priory Library, and so forth. Originally, I had planned on staying in New York through the beginning of September (unless another paid position came up, about which more anon); at which time I would have a two-week paid vacation. I would then use that extra two weeks pay to make whatever move was called for.

Now, however, I can not wait; and given New York expenses, I have absolutely nothing saved towards any move at all. In addition, my hiatal hernia and several other medical problems are all acting up badly; and I may have to have a major operation. I will be seeing the doctor next Monday, and will not really know until then. (Part of the reason for my financial crisis is a misdiagnosis I received of Kaprosi's Sarcoma--the so-called "Gay cancer"--at St. Vincent's Hospital. It turned out not to be KS at all; and was rediagnosed and treated at New York University/Bellevue Hospital).

Although I have several resumes and feelers out regarding other positions more closely related to what I perceive my Christian ministry to be (my present job in an occultist bookshop hardly fits into that category), none of those have materialized yet. It is, however, essential that I make a move as quickly as possible...and I am totally broke at the present time.

Therefore, I come to you at this time begging for any financial help you can give. If you wish it to be tax deductible, you should make it out to my name but earmarked for The Prior's Discretionary Fund: Community of the Love of Christ. Insofar as the move--whether in New York or back to San Francisco--will be a move of the Community's Offices as well, such earmarking is permissible. However, insofar as the only bank account which I have for the Community is in San Francisco, cheques or money-orders should be made out, for purposes of cashing, to: The Rt. Rev'd Prior Mikhaël Itkin, C.L.C.

Please respond to the address below, as I use this as a mailing address due to the mailboxes where I live not being safe from theft.

Thank you so much for whatever help you are able to give at this time.

In the Love of the Risen Christ,

+M. Mikhaël Francis Itkin, C.L.C.

The Rt. Rev'd Prior Mikhaël-Francis Itkin, C.L.C.
c/o Rabenstein
60 West 13th Street Apt. 3-D
New York City NY 10011

Westy Eymond
Oshon of Faith

At our last congregational meeting
some important questions were asked
which need to be answered. As
much as possible, I would like to
some sermons over the next few weeks
deal with a number of those questions in
Probably the first and most important
of these questions deals with the
unique mission of Metropolitan
Community Churches. Are we a
church for ^{gay & lesbian} people? Is this a
gay church?

Ever since the beginning of its
founding, MCC has been answering
this question — I must answer that
question as I understand it and in
that answer what I feel to be my
unique call to ministry in MCC.
~~To do that I need to tell a personal~~
~~story —~~

For me, the overwhelming Biblical metaphor which is the closest analogy to MCC is the Exile and the post-Exilic period. If you remember, the Hebrew ~~people~~^{people} had been two, Judah & Israel which came together under David - but through greed & oppression had divided back into the two much weaker kingdoms, which fell - each in turn to Assyria and finally Persia. Cyrus, the King of Persia, finally freed the people and they came back to their land with great rejoicing - only to turn against the people who had remained on the land - not been part of the Exile - and to become very narrow and puristic about their faith - setting up conditions for who was a Jew and how that could be proven and not permitting others to be part of the faith as full members.

Yrs, in the midst of this, a group of
prophets ^{who had been part of the exile themselves} spoke out against the past.

Isaiah's narrowness and said the
the ~~House of God~~ ^{temple} should be a
house of God for all nations.

For me, many of us have been the
exiles - exiled from the church. My
own exile was as much for being
a woman as for being a lesbian,
and that colors my understanding
of MCC. As you know, I had been
a relig. educator to a very large So. Baptist
Church. I was a "married lady" to 3
youngsters and turned up each Sunday
in my flowered dress & Anita Bryant
wig - but my marriage fell apart.
My never do well husband moves not
work, lost 4 jobs in a row for incom-
petence, and I finally tired of
supporting him. At that point,

I went in to talk to our assistant pastor
in counseling & was told it was my
place as a Thai woman to stay in that
marriage & follow him into what could
only be an open pit — because he was
my head. I didn't do that. I went
to church after we separated & was treated
kindly, but my position ^{as RE. director} became very
shaky and I finally voluntarily left
that church ^{position &} for a similar position in
another church — but as a separated
woman! I subsequently went into a lesbian relationship
I was faced with the
realization that if I — as a divorced
woman had been treated with so little
understanding — what would they do
with my homosexuality — and my true
evil began at that point.

I came back into the church through
UCC — which not only accepted but
celebrated ~~me~~ my homosexuality

as a gift of God — as all sexuality is.

Yes, MCC has a special mission — and if it does, it is two-faced: to bind up the wounds of those who have been in the exile; to help to restore the faith of those who have been told that they are outside of God's love — and secondly to celebrate our sexuality as a god-given good gift and help all people to come to an understanding of that — ~~we are~~
~~not just a~~

Christianity Today this month has a number of articles about Gandhi; and I want to draw a parallel from something in one of those articles.

It is always sad that when people — any people — are making decisions as to how they will believe and live out their beliefs that the actions of others can drive people away.

Good, but narrow, Christians so often make Christianity a rejection of specific human beings. Racist Christians may well have kept Gandhi out of Christianity. Anti-gay + anti-lesbian feelings + actions may have driven many of us out of the Church; anti-woman feelings + actions have driven many women out of the Church.

MCC has a mission. To make the Christ and our faith available to any person who will come. But we carry out that mission uniquely — by using our own sexual stories as way of showing God's all-encompassing love. We must not be like the post-biblical prophets who closed Judaism to others, but like Isaiah + others who came later, called upon that faith to be a house of God for all nations.

But hear this, we were called into being
to work in the gay & lesbian community.
I want you to look around. We have
evangelized many, many men over
the years. We have a real credibility
gap with women. Years ago, I sat at
a Faith, Fellowship & Order conf in Brooklyn;
there were 6 young M.D.'s at the front of
the room + 1 black woman. These men
dominated that meeting. The audience
was ^{almost entirely white} ~~all~~ men except for one table of
women - black + white, ^{most} ~~many~~ of whom
are now MCC ministers. ~~or have been...~~ The men talked
about how successfully they had evangelized
the "gay" community + the ^{growth} ~~number~~ of
MCC. We women sat there knowing
that we were the 1 or 2 or at most
one of a half dozen women at our
MCC's and we were angry & upset
and hurt because what we heard

from those men was the need to move from the gay male community $\rightarrow$ to the ~~non-gay~~ ~~straight~~ community and our hearts bled because we could see that women had not been touched, very few black people had been touched, almost no Hispanics had been touched — and yet here were our brothers ready to move on past us to the ~~the~~ non-gay community.

As I prepared for today's sermon, I thought about the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus — The women first at the tomb, the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and finally to the fisher~~men~~^{folk} and I thought of so many of our churches who have been fishing off one side of the pool & catching so little and the voice of Jesus, so wisely saying, "Cast your

nets on the other side of the boat" —
and coming up 5 thousands of fish.

Then I thought about what Jesus
had been doing while they were out
fishing — he'd been cooking + preparing
dinner — preparing a picnic, if you
will for them, and when they came
in from fishing, he invited them
to contribute some of their catch
and join his picnic.

That's the metaphor I want to leave
you with. There's a whole group of
people waiting to hear about UCC. We've
fished ~~a little~~ all night — ten years —
in the male gay community and done
a little. Possibly 5 a change of
emphasis, we can toss our nets in
again — on the other side of the boat —
and reap a ~~large~~ harvest which
surpasses our wildest dreams.

April 20, 1983

Greetings once again from Affirmations. Unfortunately there have been, as is no doubt obvious to the reader, further exasperating delays in getting this one issue of Affirmations out to you. On the brighter side--I can now tell you that there is in fact only one issue for the 1982-83 year.

Boston University School of Theology has not yet released the money due to Affirmations, but I am hopeful after these long months of negotiation that the process has actually begun. Perhaps we'll have it within the next month or so!

The information on the back side of this sheet is for the most part still applicable with regard to options, with the following updates:

Option #2 By this time you should have received cancelled checks or other notification from your banks. We deposited the money/checks in January so they should have cleared by now. Refunds will still be available under the same conditions, but again your patience will be required.

Option #3 If you must choose this option, I will need to have a statement from you as to when you began your subscription in 1982 and the amount of money that you paid. I will strongly discourage you from this option, for the most part because it makes the most work for me (I've decided I might as well be honest with you and with myself!) which will delay your return letter. Again I will need to have a stamped, self-addressed envelope from you.

As to the future of Affirmations...well it's hard to say. A group of of women from the various Boston Theological Schools have been meeting informally throughout the year. There has been no decision that I'm aware of to organize once again, nor are there any plans to reproduce Affirmations next year at this time. The most information I can give you is that the mailing list will be maintained with all the other records, so that you can be contacted if a group of women decide to begin again.

This mailing was finally made possible through an exchange agreement with The Women's Theological Center. They have provided the costs involved in the mailing. As such you will find enclosed one of the Center's brochures describing the Study/Action Program to begin this September. You will also be receiving information from them about upcoming programs as it is made available. They deserve a great deal of thanks for their assistance with finally making Affirmations available to all of you!

Finally, a word of thanks to each of you for your patience. I have received numerous calls and letters (and a few bills) which I have been unable to respond to by my self during these last several months. I am glad that you have finally received what is rightfully yours and I am glad that at least this one issue of Affirmations was able to persevere!!!

Many thanks once again. Shalom,

Jennifer

Jan 15, 1983

Dear Friends of Affirmations,

Greetings of the New Year! I rejoice that you are now holding in your hands the first issue of this year's edition of Affirmations. Unfortunately, it may also be the last. The front page story will update you on our situation and the how-come's and why-for's. At this point, I am not willing to make any promises, guarantees or prophecies regarding Affirmation's future.

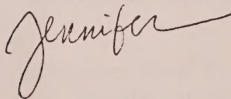
For those of you who have paid money for a "product" which you probably will not receive in full, here are your options:

- 1) Consider your subscription money a donation to pay off the bills from printing this one issue and/or provide some financial basis for the newsletter to start up again sometime in the future.
- 2) If you subscribed for the 82-83 year and sent your check in within the last seven months (since June), you will notice that you have not yet received a returned cancelled check. If you want a refund of \$5.00 send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the address on back.
- 3) If your subscription began previously to June 1982, but runs throughout some period of 1983, you have a legal right to a refund of a probated amount. If you choose this option, you will need patience as B.U. School of Theology is holding the Affirmations money and all of our attempts to release it thus far have been blocked. Have patience and pray. If we need you to take further action (letters, etc.), I will contact you.
- 4) For those of you who receive Affirmations on an exchange basis, the decision is up to you. We are much encouraged to hear of your happenings-beacons in a stormy night and so forth-and also understand financial frugalities. Thanks for your ongoing existence!

Producing this one issue of Affirmations has been an amazing experience in creative improvisation. Some good people chipped in here and there but we need a lot more time and energy to make it happen. These are ill times for women to allow further separation and isolation but we sometimes have difficult choices. May your struggles and dreams be supported by your choices and the spirits which connect us.

Shalom,

Jennifer



AFFIRMATIONS

NEWSLETTER OF THE WOMEN OF THE BOSTON-AREA THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS (MAYBE)

VOLUME TEN

NUMBER TWO

DECEMBER 1982

ISSN 0162-8038

No, AFFIRMATIONS is not dead ... yet. And personally as well as politically, I for one do not want to see this newsletter breathe its last breath. We may be gasping quite a bit these days but the spirit and the courage of women committed to justice and faith throughout the Boston area is vitally alive and present for those with eyes to see and ears to hear; people like Kip Tiernan, Sarah Small and Delores Pickett in Roxbury, Donna Finn and Doreen Powell in Dorchester, and a host of women throughout the many theological schools and centers here in Boston. These women create the way to keep on going come what may because they must. AFFIRMATIONS is in much the same situation.

Let me tell you why this is the first issue of a newsletter which for the last nine years has been published on a regular basis. Read thoughtfully for this is our story, a part of our herstory which should not soon be forgotten.....

In the spring of 1981, the Women's Theological Coalition withdrew from the BTI due to an apparently unresolvable "divergence in priorities and values between the WTC and the (BTI) Executive Committee." Throughout 1981-82, the newly structured WTC worked to develop new modes of functioning and sponsored a year long program of presentations by women faculty in the BTI in their respective theological disciplines. AFFIRMATIONS was published for the WTC out of the Anna Howard Shaw Center at BUSTh through a cooperative arrangement and edited by Corinne Colman. Forces and systems beyond these women's dedication inched their way into the story slowly and methodically. By the end of the 81-82 school year, there were six active members of the WTC (three-quarters of whom were not returning in the fall) and the Shaw Center was in open struggle with the BUSTh administration for its survival. The outlook, beginning fall 1982, was grim.



Our Bodies Ourselves/CPF

continued page 2

AFFIRMATIONS NOT DEAD YET!

continued from page 1

Two women from the 1981-82 WTC returned and the Shaw Center was frozen including the work-study jobs and the budget in which the AFFIRMATIONS money was temporarily residing. Mail was coming in requesting information, new & renewed subscriptions, material to be published and thankfully no bills! An informal gathering of women from BTI schools resulted in women expressing interest and support but also reservations about how to proceed. We continue to try to release the funds from BUSTh and meet ongoing resistance which I believe stems from the high level of distrust and political conflicts related to incidents of injustice within the school.

So here we are with a high and increasing need for continued networking in the face of rising global, national and institutional policies which further constrict women from pursuing their goals and defining their realities. And we can create the way because we must. As the recipient of this inheritance, I note and urge the following:

- 1) the tasks involved in publishing this newsletter are more than this individual can take on by herself voluntarily, we need a small group willing to take on the responsibility.

- 2) the value of AFFIRMATIONS lies in its bringing women together to continue naming and maintaining our struggle for justice & peace.

In other words, we gotta keep on going on and we'd better do it together if we want our going to keep on. We need money, we need your contributions of works, we need your time, we need your energy and mostly we need our collective courage to take the step beyond the place we thought we could go. Come on, let's go!

Jennifer Kerby

happenings

BTI LESBIAN CAROLING PARTY for faculty, students, alumni and friends on Sat., December 11th at 8 pm. B.Y.O. to 8 St Mary Rd Cambridge. For more info, call Susan at 354-7316.

BOSTON WOMEN'S ORDINATION CONFERENCE LECTURE SERIES: Fri., January 14th--Can Men and Women Have the Same God; the mandate for women's liberation in scripture. Pauline Turner of B.C. and Bernard Cooke of H.C. \$3.50, 7:30 pm at the Paulist Center, 5 Park St. Call 646-3320 for more info.

WOMANSPiRiT CELEBRATIONS are monthly liturgies sponsored by the Women's Theological Center. The next one is Sun, January 9th at 4:00 pm, located in Marion Hall at Emmanuel College on The Fenway. For details, call 277-1330 on Wed & Fri.



CPF



Need Help getting your act together?

SYLLABI/BIBLIOGRAPHY SERVICE AT EDS!!!

From courses on women and religion taught over the past 5 or 6 years are available from the Women of EDS. For a complete listing and price info, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Anne Gilson, Resources Coordinator, EDS.

A NEW BOOK on The Women of Early Methodism written by Dr. EK Brown is available at pre-publication costs (\$16.50) by ordering now!! Contact Dr. Brown at BUSTh, 353-3073.

"GETTING BEYOND AN ABORTION" a new guide for all "who for personal, professional and political reasons are concerned about the issue of abortion." Send \$3.95 (payable by check or money order) to:

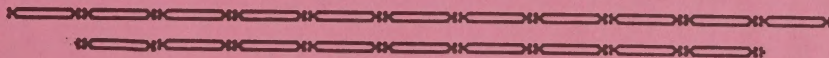
Diana Carter, M.S./P.O. Box 2230/Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

COMPUTERIZED FEMINIST MAILING LISTS available at low cost, zip-coded for bulk mailings, target groups by location, interests, etc. More information available through NWML/1195 Valencia St./San Francisco, CA 94110 or call (415) 824-6800.

WIRE: Women's International Resource Exchange provides published and unpublished accounts and analyses by and about women in the Third World, emphasis on low cost reproduction & distribution. Contact-WIRE/2700 Broadway/New York, NY 10025 (212) 666-4622

WOMEN MOVING CHURCH, a 28 pg tabloid including reflections, poetry, music, feminist liturgies and analyses. Send check for \$3.50 plus 25% for postage to: Women Moving Church/Center of Concern/3700 13th St. NE Washington, D.C. 20017.

now being compiled: Guide to Media on Reproductive Rights. Organizers presently need your help and information on films, videotapes and slideshows on reproductive rights and related topics. Contact-Abigail Norman/Media Network/208 West 13th St/New York, NY 10011.



ANDOVER-NEWTON WESTON GORDAN-CONWELL BOSTON UNIVERSITY
EPISCOPAL BOSTON COLLEGE HARVARD HOLY CROSS ST JOHN'S

Women Staff, Students, Faculty & Administrators:

Send in announcements of your collectives and caucuses, your activities and programs, your \$\$ contributions, your ideas and poetry. We need each other here and now so as Ma Bell says: Reach out & touch someone!

What's Happening???

TechSpeak
Reflections on a Potentially Unifying Issue

written by Jane B. Blood

TechSpeak is my term for the exclusive use of any of the dialects, idioms, personal metaphors, disciplinary terminologies, all the many languages of life, verbal and non-verbal. TechSpeak is insistence that one's self-expression is the "correct" form of expression. The common languages of TechSpeak in professional religious work today are probably PsychSpeak and SpiritSpeak, not the LitSpeak and Bible-Speak primary until mid-century.

My own TechSpeak got me in trouble once in divinity school. I was talking about a scriptural passage when a psychologist suggested I stop using "lit crit." Without realizing it I was using what to the other person was an unfamiliar metaphor, a distancing expression. The incident was a misunderstanding of a sort that can be avoided if those of us with specific disciplines, ethnic, personal or other metaphors can recognize, share, even translate for each other the ways we express ourselves.

In our day, once again in history, we "dream of a common language."* We seek a common language because we find ourselves in a babel of TechSpeak, building structures and systems that are rightly focused on specific tasks but of severely limited use. The common language we seek will emerge not by denying the power of anyone's language or metaphor but by reconciling the best of many metaphors into new expressions of reality.

Today's professional religious systems and metaphors have moved dangerously far from their roots in original story-telling forms. As women especially, in order to survive, even to hope to flourish, we must listen to each other, reconcile with each other on the basis of shared concerns, keep trying to clarify our understandings of the varying metaphors which, unless we hear each other, can turn us against each other or, at best, separate us.

Recently, I was at a meeting of Black, Third World and white women. We were brainstorming topics for a conference. A Black woman cautioned that we were tending toward white middleclass expressions for the problems of life. I asked her how Black women might describe life problems. She replied with "trials and tribulations." I am a middleclass WASP. My mother sometimes used that expression. Another of her favorites was to describe a dubious idea as a "snare and delusion."

I know that because of my race and class I am part of the trials and tribulations, the snares and delusions of Black and Third World women. I'm sure, though, that exploring everyday language through sharing our own experiences can bring us closer to finding common ground in our experiences as women, whether the issues are of race, class, religion, or personal need. Then we can hear each other and reach those whom we wish to have hear and understand what we're saying.

* Adrienne Rich, The Dream of a Common Language, (W.W. Norton Co. Inc., 1978), pp. 7-9.

Affirmative Action/Civil Rights Lawsuit

Nancy Richardson, former Director of Student and Community Life at BUSTh and presently teaching at EDS and co-directing the Women's Theological Center, will go to court on Monday, December 6th in her continued pursuit of justice. The lawsuit is directed against the Dean of STh and the Trustees of B.U. and resulted from the Dean firing Nancy because of her vocal support of women's rights, racial justice and affirmative action in hiring by the university. Receiving no response from her attempts to resolve the injustice within STh and B.U. procedures, Nancy filed a complaint in civil court. Now, over a year later due to repeated attempts on the part of B.U. to delay the trial, the case will be heard by a jury trial at Suffolk County Superior Court.

YOUR SUPPORT IS VITALLY NEEDED!!

This lawsuit is important not only to the functioning of the particular institution of BUSTh but also to the strengthening of affirmative action effectiveness and civil rights enforcement at a time when the New Right is leading out serious attacks on these crucial efforts to achieve social and economic justice in our country today.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Attend the trial proceedings; the courthouse is located behind the big, curved complex across Cambridge St. from the Government Center T-stop. Call April (days) 734-1300 x503.
- **Send \$\$\$\$ to Boston-Cambridge Ministries in Higher Education Legal Expense Fund. LAWSUITS COST BIG BUCKS and you can believe that B.U. has money to foot their bill. Any and every amount you can donate is helpful and tax-deductible! Why not give a gift of money to an important cause as a Christmas present?!
- **SPREAD THE NEWS by announcing the trial in your parishes, your classes. Ask for donations from groups with which you are affiliated.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT--THE COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE AT BUSTh



An excerpt from Carter Heyward's The Redemption of God; A Theology of Mutual Relation, University Press, Washington D.C., 1982

My anger burns for justice.
And it is time. We are ready
to learn by doing what we are
afraid to think about, because
we know already that to touch
is to mend brokenness, and that
our tender rage may raise the
dead.

p. 149

AFFIRMATIONS is the newsletter of the women of the nine Boston-area theological schools.

Opinions represented in this newsletter are those of the individuals submitting articles and announcements; in no way are these opinions seen as representative of the schools of the BTI. All opinions are welcome and encouraged, critical and constructive debate is vital to our struggle.

Material should be signed when submitted. Names will be withheld upon request.

At present, due to vast uncertainties, AFFIRMATIONS will be published when women submit articles and other material and when women can put it together. Continued publication also depends on our financial situation. Contributions are welcomed, make checks payable to AFFIRMATIONS.

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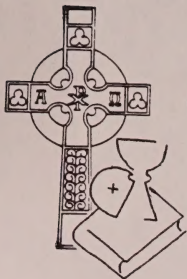
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The Priory
Community of the Love of Christ

ASCENSION: 12 May 1983

PERSONAL / CONFIDENTIAL

Dear

Marge -

CHRIST IS RISEN!

This note is a somewhat more personal supplement to the enclosed letter. I hope, in this manner, to be able to share with a few close friends some of the background to the enclosed. I trust that you will treat this in a confidential manner.

Last May I gave up my apartment in San Francisco, divested myself of my belongings other than a minimum of clothing, the Priory Library (which is only about 200 books), the Community files and certain Gay Movement files which have been entrusted to us. Edric, my feline companion of the past twelve years, and I then moved to New York City so that I could be close to my mother while she underwent several major and dangerous operations.

The first three days in New York were taken up with unpacking at temporary quarters, participating in a major Ecumenical Service at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in support of the U.N. Special Session on Disarmament, participating in the 1-million strong mass demonstration in support of disarmament (at Central Park) and visiting my mother. The fourth day, the immediate excitement of those peace actions being over, I awoke and realized that I had made a major mistake in giving up my San Francisco apartment rather than letting the brother whose name was still on the rental agreement sublet it until I returned. New York was and is no longer my home in any sense!

The simple fact that I have never loathed being in any city as much as this has undoubtedly contributed substantially to the various illnesses that afflict me at this time. I am undergoing a hiatal hernia and other gastro-intestinal problems so severe that I may have to have a major operation; my arthritis has intensified to the point that I am rarely without a walking stick; I can only breathe, due to acute sinusitis, by taking enough ephedrine sulfate that it approaches or goes over the danger point; and my depression has come back so badly that I am in therapy because of it. I have been mugged at knife point once since being back; I have had to move four times since being here (and those who know me well know that I generally settle in at one place for years); and my book on ANDROGYNY, GAY LIBERATION AND RADICAL CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP, which several mainline publishers have expressed interest in, and for which the Introductions have been supplied by a major evangelical feminist theologian, a Gay Jesuit and an MCC Clergy person, has not had anything done on the final draft since I've arrived in New York—and neither has the entire inclusive language Sacramentary which is to be a supplement to the book.

Shortly after arriving in New York, I decided to try work at a secular job again, after many years of not doing so. Of course, it has cut off my SSI disability payments for the present. The job, however, pays poorly for New York expenses and, worse yet, it is at the largest occult and metaphysical bookseller in the world: which is hardly the place for a born-again Christian Gay-person who strives to be a disciple of Jesus our Liberator! Added to that, shortly after beginning work and at the height of the present AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and its related Kaposi's Sarcoma scare, I received the misdiagnosis of KS mentioned in the enclosed. Needless to say, all of that has added immeasurably to the depression and stress; and, in turn, to the physical ills that are manifesting that psycho-spiritual distress.

Now I have arrived at a crossroad. Bishop Mark, from whom I've been renting quarters, is moving from New York in less than three weeks and I have not found another place to live; nor due to the financial bind, do I have the funds to do so. I had planned to remain at the bookstore job until the beginning of September, unless another job more related to the Christian ministry of reconciliation/peacemaking and/or Gay Liberation were to materialize. I believe I must apply the radical Christian discipleship to which the Holy Spirit has led me.

I had intended to remain at the job until September since I have two weeks paid vacation coming then, and I could have used the money to move back to San Francisco at that time. Now, however, I must move right away; whether in New York or to San Francisco. In New York I have no place to move with the cat, books and files; and I have really been quite despairing about it, contemplating the most desperate way out although I know it to be mortal sin. With the help of my spiritual director, confessor and therapist, I have largely overcome the suicidal aspect of the depression, and I praise God for that. However, the move must be made, whatever it is to be.

Although my hope is to bring the Community of the Love of Christ into Metropolitan Community Church within the next few years, as a stable ecumenical episcopal Covenant-Community (religious Order), in San Francisco at present there is a Russian Reformed Monastery with which we are in ecumenical fellowship and at which I could stay while my SSI is being reactivated and while I look for a place of my own. In either case, however, I have no funds to make what must be an almost immediate move.

That is the reason I write to you at this time. Please pray for me; and please send whatever financial help you can. Thanking you in advance for your kindness, I remain

Faithfully yours in the Love of Christ our Risen Saviour,

(The Rt. Rev'd Prior) Mikhael-Francis Itkin, C.L.C. Bishop
c/o Rabenstein
60 West 13th Street, Apt. 3-D / New York City NY 10011

+ M. Itkin

